

St Mary's School, Mosgiel Newsletter



Mission Statement—St Mary's is a Catholic School dedicated to the provision of the highest quality primary education with a special emphasis of Catholic values and attitudes.

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Term 2 Week 5

22 May 2012

62 Church Street, Mosgiel, Dunedin 9024

Dear Parents, Caregivers and Friends of St Mary's School,

The recent National government's plan to lift class sizes and introduce performance pay is a huge concern to all teachers, school Board of Trustees but most importantly to us as parents.

Many schools will lose teachers or at the very least have their staffing negatively effected to a significant degree which will simply mean a lot more children in each individual class with less scope to support children who are finding learning a struggle.

I wish I could believe that the people who are advocating lifting class sizes to over 30 pupils in the junior school had taught in these conditions or had been a parent of a child in these classes but I am relatively confident in saying that they won't have. I taught in a Private school in the U.K. where parents paid huge fees to ensure that their children were in small classes and the level achievement that these children attained was exceptional compared to the state school pupils who routinely had 30 plus per class.

When I returned to New Zealand I found that class sizes had decreased to the levels that we currently have and that achievement was increasing accordingly, to a level that showed (as it still does) that New Zealand is a leading light in World Education.

The arguments put forward in support of the lifting of class sizes are, I believe purely economic. No rational argument can be put forward to support that teaching 30 pupils will achieve better results than teaching 25, it's simply not logical. But the real shame if these changes come to pass is that the pupils who need extra support to achieve; the Governments so called long tail, will be exactly the pupils who will again miss out.

But I believe it is not too late to change the direction that these changes are head to as all politicians dislike not being popular. If enough people share my concerns at these proposed changes nation wide then perhaps this error will not come to pass. If you want to let the Prime Minister know of your concerns then simply email him at john.key@parliament.govt.nz and share your concerns with him.

Have a great week.

Mike Brosnahan
Principal

Room 3 Art Gallery Paintings



Our Vision : Confident, reflective, risk-taking, lifelong learners in a Catholic School.

Dates for May

Friday 25th Reports go home
Tuesday 29th Confirmation 6.30pm
Wed and Thurs 30th & 31st -Interviews

June

1st Assembly Rms 4/6 2.20pm
5th –8th Scholastic Book Fair
5th Mufti Day
8th Assembly Rm 3/5
11th PTA Meeting 7.30pm
13th BOT Meeting 7.30pm
13th Extra Spelling Quiz
14th Rm 7 Camp Meeting 7pm
15th Assembly Rms 1 & 2
18th St Johns Visit
27th Prepared Speeches Yrs 6-8

Parent Teacher Interviews - 30th & 31st May

We are now set-up to enable booking for your parent interviews online, this is very easy and gives you control over the times available.

The site is www.schoolinterviews.co.nz

You will be asked for the event code: **VTRNK**
This takes you to St Mary's, Mosgiel Parent-Teacher interviews.

Step 1: Enter Your Details (name etc)
Step 2: Choose Your Child's Room/Teacher
Step 3: Choose Your Times, just click on the time you want.

You are finished unless you wish to cancel or re-schedule. If you entered your email address it will send a confirmation email,(you may need to check your junk folder for this email).

If you do not have access to a computer you are welcome to use the classroom computers before or after school, and teachers can help you if required.

A thought for the week...

"There are no little things.
Little things, so called, are the hinges of the universe."
-Fanny Fern

Mufti Day Wednesday 6th June

As our service project for Term Two we will be holding a Mufti Day on Wednesday 6th June. All money raised will go to support the Chair of Neurosurgery at Otago University Dunedin Hospital.

All of us know someone who having this service in our city has been effected for the better, and to support this concept our mufti day will have the theme of a **hat day**—to highlight the importance of our head and brain. Gold coin donation please.

Kapahaka

We have had a fantastic response to the relaunch to our Kapahaka.

Stacey and John Peita have very kindly agreed to lead this group with St Mary's staff, on Tuesday evenings at 5pm, starting on the 29th May.

There is a set-up meeting today in the foyer at 3pm for everyone interested.

Altar Servers Sunday 20th May

Lorie Parker, & Michaela Sutherland

School Uniform

St Mary's has a uniform that we can all be proud of and while the winter options offer some more casual alternatives there is still a prescribed uniform.

It is with real concern that we notice a number of children wearing branded tracksuit bottoms, this is not acceptable because it leads to the exact situations that wearing a uniform alleviates—competitions of who has 'cool' clothes. The track-suit bottom that is to be worn is the prescribed blue with no writing or branding, and especially no other colours.

Also please check your child's shoes are black or brown leather school shoes as in the uniform policy.

The Board of Trustees also has a uniform dress code that a number of pupils are not meeting—please note: only a small stud type earring is to be worn—no make up and hair should be tied back with the correct accessories—no fancy clips. See the uniform policy attached.

Please remember that the reason for wearing a uniform is to stop competition or teasing about what clothes someone wears and to ensure that everyone feels a part of the same team.
-School uniform information attached.

Uniform

Winter Options available for Terms 2 and 3

- Girls: White or navy skivvy for winter
Long sleeve white blouse
Navy tights or tracksuit pants (plain)
Royal Blue polar fleece - for outdoors only, this is not to replace the jersey.
- Boys: Grey Long sleeve grey shirt or navy skivvy
Winter grey shorts
Navy Blue track suit pants (plain)
Royal Blue polar fleece - for outdoors only, this is not to replace the jersey.

Uniform Dress Code

A School uniform provides standardization in respect of appearance and equality. It identifies the children as pupils of St Mary's School.

Wearing a uniform helps develop pride in appearance, school identity, and allows the learning process to proceed without reference to undue fashion consciousness.

The following clarifies the expectation with regards to uniform.

Appearance and Standard of Dress

Pupils are expected to be in correct uniform during school hours, to and from school.

Students are also expected to keep themselves and their clothing clean and tidy, and to present a good image of themselves, to the community. Under garments should not be visible.

While there is a set summer (Terms 1 and 4) and winter (Terms 2 and 3) uniform there is flexibility in the wearing of each uniform depending upon weather conditions.

This will be at the discretion of the Principal.

Hair

Hair must be clean, tidy and needs to be safely restrained at all times.

Hair style should be reasonable, simple and natural in colour. Extremes of style or colour are discouraged and the Principal shall be the final judge of what is allowed.

Jewellery

Small stud type earrings may be worn in the earlobes (no rings or bracelets)

No visible body piercing is permitted.

Only badges issued or approved by the school may be worn.

A watch is the only other item of jewellery allowed to be visible.

Makeup

Makeup and coloured nail polish is not permitted.

Safety Vests

Students are issued with safety vests and are to wear their safety vest to and from school, on walks during school hours, and it is school policy that students wear safety vests when biking to and from school.

Sunhat Policy

School policy states all pupils and staff are required to wear a royal blue sunhat (Bucket or Aussie style) during terms 1 and 4 while at School. These can be purchased from Postie Plus or The Warehouse.

School Blues

Blues are awarded for high level of achievement. They are worn under the monogram on their jersey.

It is acknowledged by the Board of Trustees that from time to time items of uniform will not be able to be worn, for reasons of repair etc. This is understood but a note explaining the reasons for this happening and the time frame is required.

e-learning snapshot 5—How much time on the computer?

There is a lot of discussion around 'how much time should be spent on the computer'... Increasing we are using the online world for genuine learning activities and I think the challenge is not really how much time should be spent on the computer but where and how should the time be spent? Following are a few simple starting points for family discussion around this topic:

- Establish good habits early—talk with your learner/s and establish some time guidelines.
- Stress homework before other online time.
- Work together on a solution for the "But I'm in the middle of a game!" protest.
- When "time's up," suggest a few alternative activities.
- Make sure that you know what your children are doing when they are on the Internet. Be interested in their online activities, and get them to show you the basics of the game they are playing, whether or not it is online.
- Get your learner to show you their learning journey on their blog or wiki, or other online learning spaces.
- Most importantly, have fun exploring the online learning potential your learner is enjoying.

<http://www.safekidgames.com/time.html>

<http://www.common sense media.org/advice-for-parents/setting-computer-limits-tips>

Anne Kenneally

Room 6 Adventure...

Here is the start of the collaborative story Room 6 are writing on a shared Google Doc. You can read the rest of it on our blog... and check out the individual stories and photos...

Our Great adventure began on Thursday the 10th of May...

We all excitedly met in class. Room 6 came to school with a bubbly attitude, we had our bags all ready and packed for our adventure. Our journey started off at 62 Church Street, Mosgiel. Then we were off to the police station. We got to see where the interview room where the asked question to the criminals. We got to see their firearms if they had to use them. Our questions were answered and we learnt a lot too. After a little learning about what the policeman do and having a tour of the station before we knew it we were at Baldwin Street and we had to walk up and down about 2 times but some of us did even more. Most of us were tired half way up but we were all relieved to see a drinking fountain at the tippy top of the awfully steep street. But here was a treasure at the top of the steepest street. Mrs K. used her phone to tell us where it was located. This is called geocaching.

More stories and photos here... <http://stmarys-room6.blogspot.co.nz/>



Thank you from the PTA!

PTA

Wow! We are a fantastic school! Firstly for selling over 14,000 cheese rolls so easily and then for making them so quickly.

We started at 1.30pm on Friday and were washing up by 1.30pm on Saturday. This could never have been accomplished without the wonderful support we received from parents, grandparents and students of our school community, so thank you all very much.

The way we all worked together shows the special spirit that St Mary's is known for.

Next week when all the money has been collected we will be able to announce the profit we have made.

Tracey Cumming and Pauline Evans —thank you for organising this fundraiser.

Quiz night—19th June

Last year the PTA hosted a Quiz Night at the RSA—this was a fun evening and the questions were not nearly as difficult as I thought they were going to be.

We are having another Quiz Night at the RSA with lots of great prizes on 19th June.

Start thinking about who you will have in your team.

- Jacquie Dodson, President.

